MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

28 FEBRUARY 1983

Algerian-Moroccan Relations

The Algerian Foreign Ministry and the Moroccan Ministry of State for Foreign Affairs confirmed that Algeria's President Chadli Bendjedid met with Morocco's King Hassan II on the Algerian-Moroccan border on 26 February, APS and Rabat radio reported on 27 February. An Algerian Foreign Ministry spokesman "reasserted that there are no differences" between Algeria and Morocco on the Saharan question, which is an issue concerning the "liquidation of colonialism," APS added. He reiterated Algeria's "readiness" to find a solution that "conforms with the established right of the Saharan people to self-determination and independence." According to Rabat radio, the talks covered issues of mutual concern, particularly the normalization of bilateral relations. Regarding the Saharan issue, the radio noted that King Hassan reiterated Morocco's adherence to OAU summit resolutions and his desire to implement them "as soon as possible."

On 27 February Riyadh radio commented that the "extraordinary" meeting had not come about by mere chance but was "carefully and meticulously prepared" a few months ago.

Lebanon

Presidential envoy Philip Habib held talks in Jerusalem with Israeli Foreign Ministry Director General David Kimche, Jerusalem television reported on 27 February. Beirut radio said Habib would communicate Lebanon's "final stand" on those matters he discussed earlier with Lebanese leaders in Beirut. An official Lebanese source cited by the radio revealed that the forthcoming round of Lebanese-Israeli-U.S. talks at Khaldah will be held on 1 March.

Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan stressed in an interview with the weekly MONDAY MORNING that Lebanon is willing to establish "any security arrangements that rule out an Israeli presence in the south, particularly any military presence," Beirut radio reported. Earlier, Major Sa'd Haddad told AFP that while his troops will be integrated into the Lebanese Army, he will not personally rejoin the Army. He said he "will not be an obstacle" and will give up his military career when Lebanon is liberated, unified, and independent.

Israel

During the 27 February Cabinet session, Foreign Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said Israel has no information about Jordanian King Husayn's "imminent integration" into the peace process but would welcome this if "he does not present any preconditions," Jerusalem radio reported. Defense Minister Moshe Arens said at the session that the coming months will be "decisive" for Israeli-U.S. relations, the radio added. In a 25 February interview with Jerusalem television, Arens stated that President Reagan's remark on a "homeland" for the Palestinians "worries" him even though he realizes that Reagan did not make his remark in a written statement but at a meeting with journalists.

In another development five bedouin were killed and four were injured when their vehicles ran over mines south of Kibbutz Ze'elim on 25 February, Jerusalem television reported. On 28 February Jerusalem radio announced that a special team is investigating recent incidents in Hebron during which shots were fired at the homes of local inhabitants and a bomb was planted near a mosque. The radio added that the situation is "very tense."

PLO Affairs

The USSR reaffirmed its solidarity with the Palestinian people's just struggle led by their sole and legitimate representative, the PLO, KUNA reported on 25 February citing a congratulatory cable from the Soviet leadership to PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat on his reelection to that post. Later, 'Arafat arrived in Sudan to participate in the Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU) congress and met with President Ja'far Muhammad Numayri on 27 February, according to SUNA. Addressing the SSU congress, the PLO leader stressed his conviction that Sudan will "meet the responsibility" of removing the Zionist threat from Africa, SUNA noted.

Commenting on President Reagan's use of the term "homeland" for the Palestinians, Baghdad Voice of PLO radio asserted that the United States pays the Arabs "lipservice" and offers "empty promises" while it gives Israel "everything." The radio added that Israel may even "officially announce" the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza in response to Reagan's "new hints."

Arab-UK Relations

Moroccan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs M'hamed Boucetta announced that the Arab seven-member committee will visit London in mid-March, MAP reported on 25 February citing Boucetta's remarks to the London paper ASH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT. The minister added that the delegation's chairman is "working toward the goal" of representation for the Palestinian people during the London visit.

Libya

The Libyans "do not accept any American intrusion designed to affect their relations with their Arab brothers," declared a 26 February Foreign Liaison Bureau statement carried by JANA. Commenting on the "continued allegations and fabrications" against Libya by Secretary of State Shultz, the statement affirmed that neither U.S. military provocations nor remarks by Shultz will scare the Libyan people.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Iranian fighter planes shot down an Iraqi aircraft in the Wal Fajr operational zone, an Iranian military communique broadcast by Tehran radio on 27 February claimed. Meanwhile, Iraqi fighter planes carried out air strikes against "important" Iranian military targets inside Iran and returned safely to base, according to an Iraqi military communique broadcast by Baghdad radio.

In a Friday sermon broadcast by Tehran radio on 25 February, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the Wal Fajr operation has only just begun and that to avoid further losses Iranian troops must be pulled back to await further orders. The Majlis speaker declared that military security reasons have prevented Iran from propagandizing future moves. Adding that Iran's aim is to rid the region of "U.S. gendarmes," Hashemi-Rafsanjani called on the nonaligned countries not to protect Iraqi President Saddam Husayn during the nonaligned summit in New Delhi.

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OVER 70 HEADS OF STATE TO ATTEND SUMMIT

BK250511 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Text] Over 70 heads of state or government have already conveyed to the Government of India that they will be attending next month's nonaligned summit in New Delhi. The movement has 97 members at present. Nineteen other countries attend as observers.

Among the prominent guests will be President Fidel Castro of Cuba, the current chairman of the movement. He will be reporting to the summit on the movement's activities and achievements before passing on the chairmanship to India.

Though the summit itself begins on the 7th, official level meetings will start from the 1st of March.

DRA'S DOST, DELEGATION ARRIVE IN NEW DELHI

LD261547 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] Shah Mohammad Dost, minister of foreign affairs, and other members of the DRA delegation to the conference of nonaligned heads of states or governments, arrived in New Delhi.

At the airport, the Afghan delegation was welcomed by P.V. Narasimha Rao, Indian minister of external affairs, a number of high ranking Indian officials, the DRA ambassador in Delhi, and members of the embassy.

According to another report, Shah Mohammad Dost, minister of foreign affairs, this morning held talks with P.V. Narasimha Rao, Indian minister of external affairs, about the issues relevant to the agenda of the conference. Dr Hasan Sharq, DRA ambassador in Delhi; J.N. Dixit, Indian ambassador in Kabul; and high ranking officials of the two countries also took part in the talks.

Cordovez Visit Discussed

BK261557 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] In New Delhi, the foreign minister of Afghanistan, Mr Shah Mohammad Dost, called on the external affairs minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, today. Mr Dost is in the capital for the nonaligned summit.

He is understood to have explained to Mr Rao the latest situation in his country particularly in the context of the recent visit of the UN special representative, Mr Cordovez, to the region.

REPORT ON DELEGATES ARRIVING FOR SUMMIT

BK271009 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] With the arrival of some delegates in Bombay today, activity gathers momentum for the nonaligned summit being held in New Delhi next month. Delegates from Botswana, Malawi, Ethiopia, Iraq, Zambia, Tanzania, and the Seychelles are expected to fly into the metropolis en route to Delhi. The Dominican Republic is sending for the first time a delegation to the nonaligned summit.

Mexican television has said in a commentary that the New Delhi summit will help in finding concrete solutions to the problems faced by the world.

The Sri Lankan president, Mr Jayewardene, who will lead his country's delegation to the summit, has said in Colombo that he will urge the summit to take urgent action to alleviate the growing economic problems of the Third World.

The Bhutanese foreign minister, Mr Dawa Tsering, has expressed the hope that the summit under the leadership of Mrs Gandhi would give a dynamic lead to the economic uplift of developing countries. Mr Tsering was speaking in Calcutta on his way to New Delhi to attend the nonaligned foreign ministers conference sheduled before the summit.

King Birendra of Nepal will lead his country's delegation to the summit, according to Radio Nepal, the delegation includes the minister of foreign affairs, Mr Padma Bahadur Khatri, and senior officials.

The Pakistan president, General Ziaul Haq, has reaffirmed that his country will work to make the New Delhi nonaligned summit a success. About Indo-Pakistan relations, he said the present atmosphere is conducive to a better understanding between the two countries.

The foreign minister of Cyprus, Mr Nikolaos Rolandhis, has described the New Delhi summit as the most significant conference and has expressed the hope that it will help in starting certain procedures that can lead to solutions.

NARASIMHA RAO VIEWS NONALIGNED SUMMIT TOPICS

BK271011 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, has said that the New Delhi nonaligned summit will have to express itself strongly on the need for declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

In a telecast from New Delhi last night, Mr Rao said that the ad hoc committee on the Indian Ocean has had a number of meetings. Though there are some differences in approach, yet there is no opposition to the zone of peace concept.

Referring to Afghanistan and Kampuchea, Mr Rao said these problems would have to be solved on the basis of the principle that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the two countries.

On the issue of global negotiations for a new international economic order, he said there is no question of giving up the talks because the industrialized countries want it.

PRESS CONFERENCE REPORTS ON INSURGENT ACTIVITIES

LD261900 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] The National Fatherland Front [NFF] organized a press conference this morning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in which a number of Afghan escapees told of the appalling conditions in the refugee camps; the difficulties resulting from the scarcity of food, the prevalence of disease, and other problems; and the military camps and military training overseen by the militarists of the imperialist countries led by U.S. imperialism, Chinese hegemonism, and Pakistani militarists.

BAKHTAR reports that the secretary of the NFF read out a report on the terrorist actions of the imperialist agents who are arming the Afghan escapee rebels in Pakistani camps and infiltrating them into Afghanistan. Questions from domestic and foreign journalists were then answered.

Text of NFF Report

LD271033 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0437 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] Kabul, Feb 26, BAKHTAR -- Following is the full text of the report given by the secretary of the NFF [National Fatherland Front] of the DRA at the press conference held at the [Word indistinct] Palace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Esteemed journalists, dear guests:

The April Revolution, which put an end to the rule of the exploiting classes connected with imperialism, evoked the enmity of all reactionary forces, world imperialism, Chinese hegemonism, regional and [word indistinct] reaction from the very beginning of the victory of the April Revolution, tens of hundreds of spies of the devilish organization of CIA [word indistinct] act and sought to hire those (?treacherous) elements who had many years ago accepted the United States citizenship or who had connection for a long time with the espionage branches of the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan.

Employing these sold-out elements, and dispatching large quantities of arms and money to Pakistan, the United States' imperialism established the counter-revolutionary camps in that country where the mercenary bands, saboteurs and murderers are provided with millary training and weapons and [word indistinct] dispatched to revolutionary Afghanistan to carry out subversion, robbery, and murdering of innocent Afghan (?people).

Within five years after the victory of April Revolution, the number of these camps exceeds hundred. [as received] During this span of time, the United States imperialism has provided 218 million dollars of assistance to the counter-revolution of Afghanistan and has allocated another (?assistance of) [word indistinct] million dollars to these bandits for the current year. This sum is two times more than the total sum of the so-called U.S. assistance provided to Afghanistan during the rule of oppressive and reactionary regimes within 20 years prior to the victory of April Revolution.

Similarly, the FRG and Britain have provided [word indistinct] million [word indistinct] million pounds sterling to the counter-revolution of Afghanistan respectively after the victory of April Revolution [words indistinct] for what purposes these assistances would be utilized by the counter-revolutionary forces of Afghanistan.

Utilizing these so-called assistances, the (?experts) from abroad (?murder) the innocent people of Afghanistan, consisting of women, children, old men, patriotic clergy, the (?activists) of cooperative movement, the vanguard worker, state employees, cultural and health personnel, destroying the production centres, setting to fire [word indistinct], damaging roads, schools, mosques, hospitals, and looting the caravans carrying food-stuff and consumer commodities for our compatriots.

Making use of these assistances, the counter-revolution of Afghanistan have destroyed a number of [figure indistinct] schools, [figure indistinct] hospitals, 111 basic health centres, 800 heavy state transport vehicles, 14,000 kilometres of communication wire including [figure indistinct] communication equipment, 906 peasantry cooperatives, a number of power station complexes, and tens of agricultural, productive, industrial and mining extraction projects.

The imperialist countries headed by U.S. imperialism and its allies not only continue their undeclared imperialist war against our revolutionary country in the form of arming the bandits with various mass-killing weapons including chemical weapons, but, also publish and broadcast thousands of provocative lies and fabrications through its devilish propaganda machinery to deceive the public opinion of the world against the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the [word indistinct] of the DRA, the people of Afghanistan, the April Revolution and its gains.

An example of these lies [words indistinct] publicised by the propaganda machinery of imperialism is the hues and cries they have waged concerning the Afghan fugitives who have fled the country as a result of the poisonous propaganda of the enemies of the revolution or forcefully [word indistinct] the counter-revolutionaries and are living under a severe condition without minimum living facilities in the hot deserts, who are actually the captives of a handful of the sold-out ring-leaders of the rebels.

Making use of these deceived elements, the regional reaction and the ring-leaders of the [word indistinct] (?receive) millions of dollars for their personal leisure and the U.S. imperialism increase and strengthen its military bases in the region under the pretext of their presence in Pakistani camps.

Thousands of our compatriots, who are living out-side of the borders of the country, are willing to return to their homeland especially after the declaration of the general amnesty decree of the Presidium of the RC [Revolutionary Council] of the DRA dated 18 June 1981, but, the sold-out elements and their American and Pakistani masters hinder their return in order to deprive them of the revolutionary gains of their own country.

The incharges of the propaganda machinery of imperialism spare no efforts to veil the criminal deeds waged by their mercenaries against our country, and to conceal that if the territory of Pakistan has not been used by them as a springboard of aggression. [sentence as received]

The international democratic public opinion has clearly realized that the U.S. Senate has approved the dispatch of weapons to counter-revolutionaries of Afghanistan so that to continue bloodshed in our homeland. [sentence as received] The pledge shamefully declared by the U.S. President Ronald Reagan in this regard in September 1982 is a clear witness to this fact.

In order to make a better (?cognizance) with the living conditions of Afghan fugitives abroad, we invite you to listen to the story of some of our compatriots, in this press conference which is convened under the auspice of the NFF of the DRA.

These compatriots of ours were for some time away from their homeland and after perception of the humanitarian policy of the revolutionary party and state of the DRA have returned to their homeland in the light of the general amnesty decree of the Presidium of the RC of the DRA.

They would themselves tell you about the essence of fugitives life which are away from their homeland and that how they are used as tools by imperialism for the implementation of its expansionist and aggressive policy and thus to continue its intervention and undeclared war aginst revolutionary Afghanistan.

BOMBS EXPLODE IN KABUL MARKET; THREE DEAD

LD271626 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1600 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] Bands of Afghan counterrevolutionaries, these enemies of our people, homeland, and revolution with their anti-Islamic and inhuman actions, once again have exposed their foul faces to the workers of our revolutionary homeland and thus provoked the indignation and curse of our workers.

Kabul citizens are aware that these criminals exploded two bombs a few days ago in the Microrayon market and on the public road there, which resulted in the merciless death of 3 innocent people and injury to 10 passengers on a bus.

In addition to the death and injury inflicted on our innocent citizens as a result of the explosions, windows were broken in a number of apartments in the Microrayon, which caused great material damage to the inhabitants.

Kabul citizens and all our compatriots who are aware of the anti-Islamic and inhuman actions of the rebels infiltrated from abroad once again expressed their indignation at the Afghan counterrevolutionaries and condemn their savage action.

BBC Report

TA271537 London BBC World Service in English 1500 GMT 27 Feb 83

[From "Radio Newsreel"]

[Text] Anticommunist guerrillas in Afghanistan are said to have been continuing their covert action in and around the capital of Kabul. Reports reaching Pakistan say that the guerrillas carried out a series of bomb attacks and other operations on the third anniversary of a big anti-Soviet demonstration that was quashed by government security forces. Ian (Hall) reports from Islamabad:

[Begin recording] The anniversary of the demonstration fell on Tuesday and according to Western diplomatic sources in Islamabad, the occasion was marked by a series of bomb attacks in Kabul during the day. The sources say most of them were in the area of Darul Aman, where there is a large Soviet presence. They say a bomb explosion damaged the Darul Aman branch of the Afghanistan Bank and there were several bomb attacks on Russian houses and vehicles. Another target was a bus carrying Afghan Government employees. The sources say one of the bombs was planted outside the radio and television building in Kabul, but this was removed and detonated safely.

The diplomats also reported a sharp increase in the level of firing throughout the city on Monday and Tuesday nights, with the heaviest outbreaks again concentrated in areas where many Soviet advisers live. The sources say that frequent bursts of machinegun and rocket fire were punctuated by shouts of Allah Akbar, God is great. They added, however, that the number of people demonstrating in this way was not nearly as large as 3 years ago.

The reports say night letters had earlier been distributed calling on people to stay at home and keep shops closed on Tuesday, but it seems there was little response to the call, after the government warned that any shops that closed would be forced open and their stocks would be confiscated. Diplomats reported that in the days leading up to the anniversary, government forces were placed on full alert and security measures were strengthened in anticipation of a wave of guerrilla activity. Resistance sources in Pakistan say that 150 guerrillas were sent into the Kabul area for the occasion and an operation similar to the one in late December had knocked out the city's power supplies. [end recording]

In Moscow, the Soviet Army newspaper, RED STAR, has said there have been three major bomb attacks in which several people had been killed and more than a dozen injured.

SOVIET HELICOPTER DOWNED BY GUERRILLAS 13 FEB

BK261658 Hong Kong AFP in English 1649 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 26 (AFP) -- A Soviet surveillance plane crashed in Afghanistan's eastern Ningarhar Province last Sunday killing all its four occupants, the pro-resistance AFGHAN ISLAMIC PRESS (AIP) today reported.

AIP said the plane, carrying four Russians including two women officers, was on a survey mission when it developed technical trouble and crashed some 35 kilometers (21 miles) north of the garrison town of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan.

Rescue teams reaching the site of the accident have taken the bodies away in helicopters, the agency said.

In another incident a Soviet gunship helicopter hit by resistance rocket fire, crashed in Amu River on the Soviet-Afghan border February 13, AIP said.

It did not give details of losses in the crash which it said occurred in northern Kunduz Province where the guerrillas reportedly gunned down 12 pro-regime communist civilians and wounded 18 others last week.

'COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES DESTROYED' IN BALKH, LOGAR

LD271646 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1530 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] Officers and men of the Army Command of Balkh Province recently destroyed a number of counterrevolutionary elements in Balkh Province and captured 68 of these robbers and murderers.

A spokesman for the command said 127 assorted weapons, 2 missile launchers, 5 anti-tank mines, and more than 10,000 rounds of assorted ammunition were seized from these criminals.

According to a report from Logar Province, a number of criminals were destroyed in the [name indistinct] region of that province by the security forces. Their ringleader, Habibollah, was also killed. A number of weapons and a quantity of ammunition were seized.

ALL UNIVERSITIES 'CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE'

BK251233 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1205 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Text] It has been officially announced that all universities, including engineering and agricultural universities, of the country will remain closed until further notice. Other educational institutions which are closed up to the 27th of this month will open on Monday, the 28th.

GOVERNMENT RELEASES 31 OF 53 ARRESTED STUDENTS

BK271724 Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali 1700 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] Of the 53 students arrested in connection with the 14 and 15 February incidents, 31 have been released. This was stated in a government note issued in Dhaka tonight.

GENERAL WARNS THOSE WITH 'ALIEN IDEOLOGIES'

BK261145 Hong Kong AFP in English 1121 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 26 (AFP) -- Major General Abdur Rahman, zonal martial law administrator and commander of the Dhaka-based Ninth Division Garrison, was quoted as saying that the armed forces would "identify and eliminate the country's enemies."

Mr Rahman, considered one of the Army's more powerful generals, opening an eye clinic near Dhaka yesterday cautioned the "pro-Indian, pro-Chinese and pro-Russian" elements to toe the line, adding that those with no respect for their own soil had no right to stay in Bangladesh, the daily ITTEFAQ said.

The English daily NEW NATION quoted the general as saying that politicians with alien ideologies or pro-Washington bias "would either mend themselves or they would be eliminated from politics."

General Rahman, in his late forties and generally seen as a rightist, said that the armed forces had taken over only because the elected representatives had failed in their duties. "We have not come to rule and exploit," he added.

He also defended measures taken by the Army to quell last week's student protest demonstrations.

Meanwhile, authorities continued to round up politicians, mostly those belonging to the alliance headed by the Awami League which, together with the students, bore the main brunt of last week's government crackdown.

Former Awami League member of parliament from Dhaka Shudhansha Shekhar Halder was the latest to be arrested. Halder has thus joined some 40 political leaders and workers, including Sheikh Hasina Wajed, Dr Kamal Hussein, and Abdus Samad Azad, all arrested in the last two weeks.

Most of the arrested politicians were reportedly given 1 month's detention and sent outside of Dhaka to various district jails.

Military ruler General Hussain Mohammad Ershad was quoted by a foreign radio as saying that the detained politicians would be freed at "an appropriate time."

Newspapers said the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported last night that the politicians would be freed so that a congenial atmosphere would surround the national dialogue to restore democracy due to begin next month on Ershad's first anniversary in power.

GANDHI COMMENTS ON ASSAM, NONALIGNED ISSUES

BK251613 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Text] The prime minister has made it clear that emergency will not be imposed in Assam, nor is there any question of president's rule there at the moment.

Mrs Gandhi was speaking at a meeting with the Foreign Correspondents Association in New Delhi today. In an hour-long question-answer session with journalists represening the world press and media, Mrs Gandhi replied to a spate of questions on Assam, the coming nonaligned summit, and the international situation.

Mrs Gandhi expressed great sorrow at the heavy loss of life in Assam, but she made it clear that violence was not the result of the decision to hold elections. She said it is the outcome of the campaign of bitterness and hatred carried on by the agitationists since 1978. The elections had to be held not only because of the constitutional necessity, but a large number of people also wanted it. Moreover, the question is whether a group of people can decide how the natural process of government should be carried on. Mrs Gandhi said all groups of people have one or the other demand, but can they then say that there should be no elections. Some opposition parties also indirectly encourage violence because they did not condemn the killings that had taken place in the 3 years of agitation.

If the agitators had not let loose a reign of terror, there would have been a much larger turnout in the elections. She did not agree with a correspondent's suggestion that the violence could have been avoided if the elections were not held. Mrs Gandhi pointed out that the agitationists had been harassing large groups of so-called foreigners and had threatened to evict them forcibly. The government had to take a decision after balancing all these considerations.

Asked by a correspondent whether she suspected a foreign hand in the trouble, she said some elements are interested in destabilizing countries like India, but it is difficult to pinpoint them. She also said that violence on such a scale cannot be attributed to one group or an individual. But wherever culprits are identified, they would be severely punished.

Asked about the comments made in some Islamic countries on the killings in Assam, Mrs Gandhi said it is in the fitness of things to express sorrow and sympathy when deaths occur as India has done in the past. But they should not interfere in our internal affairs. If India made a comment about the happenings in another country, they jump on us, she said.

Answering questions about the nonaligned summit, the prime minister -- who will be taking over as chairman of the movement -- said India does not believe in a leadership role. We want to work in partnership with all countries. She would divert attention from issues that divide the nonaligned countries and concentrate on common interests like economic issues. A major effort would be made to push South-South cooperation.

About Kampuchea, Mrs Gandhi made it clear that there is no question of inviting Prince Norodom Sihanouk to the summit. In India's view, the Kampuchean seat should be kept vacant. She said there is no specific proposal to end the tragic Iran-Iraq conflict, but the heads of government would try to find out some way if possible.

HITESHWAR SAIKA ELECTED ASSAM CONGRESS-I HEAD

BK260917 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Mr Hiteshwar Saika was unanimously elected leader of the Assam Congress-I legislature party in Gauhati last night. His name was proposed by the Pradesh Congress-I president, Mr Herendra Nath Talukdar, and seconded by Mr Keshab Chandra Bagoi and Syeda Anwara Ataimur, both former chief ministers. Mr Bhishma Narain Singh, who attended the meeting as observer, announced Mr Saika's election.

Mr Saika told newsmen that it will be his government's endeavor to restore peace and normalcy among different sections of the people of the state.

State Government Sworn In

BK271251 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Excerpts] A 13-member ministry headed by Mr Hiteshwar Saika has been sworn in in Assam. The governor, Mr Prakah Mehrotra, administered the oath of office and secrecy at Raj Bhawan [Governor's House] in Gauhati this afternoon. Of them, one is a minister of state.

Earlier today, President Giani Zail Singh revoked the president's rule in Assam.

Chief Minister Calls for Peace

BK280934 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 28 Feb 83

[Text] The Assam chief minister, Mr Hiteshwar Saika, has appealed to the people for united efforts by all sections, particularly youths and students, in restoring peace and normalcy in the state. In a broadcast over All India Radio stations in Assam last night, Mr Saika said that the recent violent incidents in the states have inflicted a grievous blow to the cherished ideals of peace and harmony. Mr Saika reiterated that the foremost task of his government will be to rehabilitate the uprooted families and to bring back the climate of confidence among all sections of the people. He said Assam has countless problems both on economic and other fronts. These can be solved only through good will and sincere efforts in a peaceful and normal atmosphere.

Referring to the foreign nationals issue, Mr Saika assured that his government will make an all out bid to find an amicable solution to the problem.

STATEWIDE PROTEST STRIKE BEGINS IN ASSAM 28 FEB

BK280806 Hong Kong AFP in English 0756 GMT 28 Feb 83

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Text] Gauhati, northeast India, Feb. 28 (AFP) -- A 24-hour state-wide protest strike began here today against Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Congress (I) Party-led government which took office yesterday.

State capital Gauhati, a city of half a million people, appeared deserted today as normal life came to a compete halt.

There were no reports of violence today after three weeks of bloodshed during which between 1,127 to 3,500 people were reported killed, several thousand injured and tens of thousands rendered homeless.

The violence followed protest action by native Assamese opposed to the inclusion on immigrants from Bangladesh and Nepal on the voters' lists.

Assam movement leaders, demanding deportation of an estimated five million immigrants from Bangladesh and Nepal, had launched the strike call saying that the government was illegally elected and had no right to rule.

The strike took effect at dawn today.

Telephone reports from around the state said the strike was total in many areas. However, the immigrant dominated districts of in Goalpara and Chachar did not observe the strike.

Officials here refused to comment on the success of the strike. Assam Government employees remained at home and even the central telegraph office refused to accept telegrams saying the staff had not reported for duties.

Paramilitary troops, posted here since violence gripped the state on February 2, were out on the streets with wireless vans keeping a strict eye on the situation.

Movement leaders had announced they would not allow the government to function.

A 13-member Congress (I) Party ministry headed by a 44-year old school teacher turned politician, Hiteshwar Saika, took office yesterday amidst unprecedented security precautions.

Residents in many areas of the state, including Gauhati, switched off their lights last night in response to a call by the movement leaders. "Darkness should greet the Congress (I) ministry," said a resident.

The controversial elections unleashed violence in this strategic border state that snowballed into group clashes among the Assamese, Bengali immigrants and state's three million tribals.

The government has admitted 40,000 houses were destroyed saying it would take months to rehabilitate and an estimated 200,000 people worst hit by the bloodshed.

PRIME MINISTER AGREES TO NUMBER OF SIKH DEMANDS

BK270920 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] The prime minister today announced the acceptance of a number of religious demands of the Sikhs. Sale of meat, liquor, and tobacco in the vicinity of Gurdwara Harminder Sahib and Durgiyana Temple in Amritsar is to be completely banned. The Jullundur station of All India Radio will start direct relay of Kirtan -- the Sikh religious prayer. Sikh passengers will be allowed to carry a kripan [sword] of 9 inches with a 6-inch blade on the Indian Airlines.

Mrs Gandhi announced these decisions at a congregation of Sikhs at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi today. Her announcement was received with loud cheers from the huge gathering assembled there to hear the prime minister.

Earlier this morning, one more part of the kotwali [police station] building in Old Delhi was handed over to the Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak [Management] Committee. Mrs Gandhi said that she had given instructions that the remaining part of the building should also be handed over to them within 3 months. She expressed the hope that the martyrdom day of Guru Arjandev, which falls in May, will be celebrated there.

The kotwali building is by the side of the Gurdwara Sishganj in Chandni Chowk and has a special historical significance because it was here that Guru Teg Bahadur had been imprisoned. He later died a martyr.

About framing of an All India Gurdwara Act to cover important Gurdwaras in the country, the prime minister pointed out that the matter concerns the state governments as well as connected with Gurdwara Committees, but she would see that consultations in this regard are started quickly to reach an agreement among the parties concerned.

Mrs Gandhi praised the valor of the Sikh community and their sacrifices for the country. She spoke of their patriotism and national pride and expressed her confidence that they would always rise to the occasion so that the country's unity is strengthened. She said she was sure no Sikh would do anything which would affect the country's unity or weaken it.

Akali Leader's Criticism

BK271559 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Excerpt] The Akali Dal president, Mr Harchand Singh Longowal, criticized the announcement of the prime minister. He said in Amritsar that his party's agitation will continue till all the religious, economic, and political demands of the Akali Dal are accepted.

VIOLENT INCIDENTS REPORTED IN MADHYA PRADESH

BK260847 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] The Madhya Pradesh chief minister, Mr Arjun Singh, announced in the Vidhan Sabha [legislative assembly] yesterday that the state Secretariat offices will be closed today. In a statement, he said the offices were closed yesterday also following some violent incidents.

Mr Arjun Singh told the house that the police were called in after a section of the employees indulged in violence.

SITUATION IN KARACHI 'COMPLETELY NORMAL'

BK271514 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] A press note issued today by the Karachi administration says the situation throughout the city remains completely normal and there were no reports of any untoward incidents from any area of the city. There was no curfew today from 0600 in the morning to 1900 in the evening. All educational institutions of the city also reopened today. The curfew hours in (Gulbahar), (Gulburg), (Joharabad) and Liyaqatabad police station areas will be as usual, that is, from 1900 to 0600.

DAWN REPORTS RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS

GF251306 Karachi DAWN in English 21 Feb 33 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 20 -- Three more federal ministers are learnt to have resigned from their jobs. But none of the three whose names were mentioned in this regard was available for confirmation. Yesterday it was officially announced that the minister for housing and works, Air Marshal Inamul Haque Khan, had resigned and his resignation had been accepted by the president.

According to unconfirmed reports, Air Marshal Inamul Haque Khan is being sent on some diplomatic assignment abroad. It may be recalled that President Zia had said earlier this month that his Cabinet was likely to be reshuffled after the current session of the Majlis-i-Shoora.

Further Report

GF251308 Karachi DAWN in English 23 Feb 83 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 22 -- New ministers to be included in the Federal Cabinet are likely to be picked up from amongst those successful candidates of the 1977 parliamentary elections who were not accused of rigging, according to indications in informed quarters here.

There were said to be 39 such candidates. Of them, seven have died. Some others, like Air Marshal (Retd) Asghar Khan who is under house arrest, and first line leaders of almost every party, including the Muslim League and the Jamaat-i-Islami, are known to be against joining the present Cabinet. This leaves about 19 persons in the field.

According to these indications, there is a possiblity that the proposed reshuffle in the Federal Cabinet may be announced before the president leaves in the first week of March to attend the non-aligned summit in New Delhi.

LAW MINISTER ON INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

BK280429 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] The Majlis-i-Shoora was reassured today that the government will continue to take steps to safeguard the country's independence and strengthen its security.

The assurance was given by Federal Law Minister Sharifuddin Pirzada while speaking on the admissibility of an adjournment motion by (Begum Nasim) and (Hafiz Mohammad Taqi) about press reports that India is stockpiling arms grade plutonium for manufacturing nuclear weapons. He said the Government and the people of Pakistan are deeply concerned about these reports and they will continue to do all that is within their power to persuade India not to develop nuclear weapons. He stressed that the Pakistan Government believed that the interests of the nations of the region could be best served by renunciation of the nuclear weapons option by all countries of the South Asian region.

The law minister said Pakistan has proposed on several occasions that India's declaration of intention not to develop weapons should be incorporated in a multilateral or bilateral agreement solemnly committing the parties not to use atomic energy except for peaceful purposes. To this end, he said, Pakistan had proposed in 1974 the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in South Asia. The concept had been endorsed by the UN General Assembly. He said Pakistan had also proposed to India a bilateral treaty renouncing the option to develop nuclear weapons. The Indian Government has not so far agreed to sign any agreement or treaty renouncing the nuclear weapons option. The law minister pointed out that India already possessed an entire nuclear fuel cycle outside safeguards. It has its own uranium for fuel with (?Cyrus) reactor given by Canada and two or three reprocessing plants which are not subject to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. According to earlier reports, India had already stockpiled unsafeguarded plutonium established at 150 to 250 kg. Besides, India possessed nuclear explosion capability which was tested in 1974.

Referring to the motivated propaganda against Pakistan, the law minister reiterated that Pakistan nuclear program is aimed at development of nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. Sharifuddin Pirzada explained that no useful purpose will be served by further discussion on this highly technical matter. The movers did not press motion after the statement by the law minister.

ZIA REITERATES POLICY ON FOREIGN MILITARY BASES

BK271620 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Text] President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq has reiterated that Pakistan will never allow establishment of foreign military bases on its soil.

In an interview with a Bombay newspaper SUNDAY OBSERVER, he said Pakistan has become a member of the Nonaligned Movement on the basis of its rights and its policies. The president said both India and Pakistan should exercise their rights of sovereignty and remain nonaligned.

About India-Pakistan relations, he said the present atmosphere is fully congenial to better understanding between the two countries. He said the Kashmir problem is a major obstacle in this regard.

HASHEMI-RAFSANJANI EXPLAINS WAR POLICY

LD251549 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Millions of our Muslim and committed compatriots have taken part in the glorious Friday prayers all over the country. The University of Tehran also witnessed the presence of the Muslim and revolutionary people of Tehran participating in the unifying Friday prayers today. This eternal Islamic tradition was held at Tehran University under the imamate of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the acting Friday imam of Tehran.

In his second sermon, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to current problems including the war, the oil problem, and the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam against the Iranian Islamic Revolution. Praising the special features of the glorious Islamic Revolution of Iran, he said: The Middle East region is different from Vietnam, Kampuchea, Algeria, El Salvador, or Nicaragua. It is a region of revolution; it contains a revolution [as heard]; and its leadership is different from other leaders of the world.

Referring to the efforts made to protect Saddam Husayn, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani said:

[Begin recording] The war has now entered another phase. We do not see Saddam as our main enemy. The United States was trying to create a gendarme in the region. It wanted to make Saddam a guardian for the protection of Kuwait, Qatar, Dubah, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and others. It wanted to remove the danger from Israel. We stopped their action and took other steps which I will explain to you. Now all of them have mobilized themselves to keep this man for the time being, to use him later. All of them have shaking hearts now. They all have to take sleeping pills before going to bed! This is true according to our information. [shouts of God is great] If you don't believe this, listen to other things that I am telling you now.

We struck the match for the Wal Fajr operations. We have not done anything else yet. We only started the first job so that they would understand what is happening. Unfortunately, because of military security reasons, we are unable to wage the necessary propaganda for the Wal Fajr operations. There are some difficulties involved in divulging everything.

One day before the start of the Wal Fajr operations, Saddam said: We have consolidated our defense lines so well that Iran cannot take even one step toward us. In just one move at the preliminary stage of the operations, our boys smashed through their so-called impenetrable fortifications, albeit suffering some losses. Saddam thought it would be impossible to cross those defense lines. In one attack, our boys smashed across the Ramli desert and the Amghar forest and all their impenetrable fortifications. Our forces moved forward to a point where they thought... [incomplete sentence as heard]. Of course, they thought it wise to prevent further losses and to have less martyrs. Therefore, they decided to come back to a certain point and stay there until they receive instructions for future action.

Saddam and the foreign radios said they halted the attack and defeated the Iranians and have achieved this and that, and they continue to talk of their achievements. However, their deeds show the truth. See how they are panic-stricken. The French external relations minister came. The Pakistani foreign minister went to Turkey for intensive discussions. Husayn of Jordan came and the Gulf Cooperation Council held a meeting. They begged the UN Security Council to call for a cease-fire.

The Soviets also lost their wits and the head of the Security Council, who is the Soviet representative at the United Nations, promptly sent us a warning and demanded a cease-fire. They resorted to the nonaligned summit. They sought help everywhere.

If you think Saddam and his kind enjoy peace of mind and these defense canals, barbed wires, and minefields will stop our forces, why the panic? They could rest in peace and hit us whenever we attack. That seems very comfortable, but why the panic? They are spreading rumors throughout the world and have confused everything.

The United States suddenly had to enter the arena. Immediately, the United States announced it will give Saddam $450 million for the purchase of foodstuff. Why did it say this? It should not have said it. Politically, such things should not be said. It considers Saddam a socialist, an extremist, and against Israel. The truth is something else. It said we buy arms from Israel. However, isn't Israel part of the United States? And if we are buying arms from Israel, why does the United States announce the payment of $450 million?

What is Sa'dun Hammadi [former Iraqi foreign minister] doing in the United States? Has he gone there for hajj rituals? Has he gone for any other business? They are telling lies when they say he is ill and has gone for treatment. Let's say he is ill and requires treatment. Are all hospitals in the United States? Why didn't he go to the Soviet Union? His qebleh [directions Muslims turn to for praying] was in the USSR. He could have gone elsewhere. He could have asked doctors from all over the world to come here. Going to the United States and all the other facts show that they themselves have understood what is happening, but they are too shy to admit it openly.

We also know what the truth is. It isn't necessary to say any more. There is no need to say any more. Our boys on the front, some of them know what is happening and many of them do not know. It is not necessary for all to know everything nor should they not try to find out, either.

Briefly, the matter has reached this point and I have to tell you a little bit about the war policy. At present, the issue of war reparations is not the only problem. The Algerian foreign minister recently came to Iran. And it has been reported that afterward he said: Iran no longer talks of Saddam's fall; there is only the question of war reparations. No, this is not true! Even during my talks with the Algerian foreign minister, I did not permit any talk about the war. I said in advance that our discussion was not going to be about the war. Of course, there have been talks with the foreign minister. This is not the problem. Look, the war has reached a stage where we, with all our martyrs and this situation and all these troubles, should say that our aim is to see that the United States sets up no new gendarmes in the region. This is how the Iraqi Ba'th Party sees itself -- as guardian of U.S. interests and as an umbrella over the heads of the shaykhs south of the Persian Gulf. It is not right for the region to be like this. The people of the region should be free. [shouts of God is great, Death to the United States, the USSR, Israel, and Saddam]

We would like to tell the Persian Gulf shaykhs: You no longer require guardians. As long as the Islamic Republic exists here, you can live with peace of mind. The guardian that you were thinking of is no good for the job. He is one of those guardians who plunders the wealth of orphans and will deceive you. He wants to rule over you. Even if you are happy with this, we are not.

In this region, our enemy is the United States. Our enemy is not Saddam alone. Saddam was deceived and became a pawn of the United States. He took action at the behest of the United States and should atone for his big mistake.

They should remove this guardian from the region and the Persian Gulf area should be left without guardians and gendarmes. The people, the nations, and the countries of the region should be free to make their own decisions and no one should bully others.

How are we going to act in the war? This is something that should not be said. This is a military secret. I am the spokesman of the Supreme Defense Council as well, but I am not going to tell you about our future moves in the war. I am only saying one thing: that in the battlefield we must show more resistance than ever before. It might take a long time, I must say this. The nation of Iran should not hope that the problem will end tomorrow or the day after. The problem has been reversed now, that is, Iraq can no longer tolerate a long war because the Persian Gulf is closed to Iraq and it cannot export its oil this way. Its oil pipelines to the Mediterranean via Syria are also closed. There is only one pipeline going through Turkey with a capacity of about 500,000 barrels a day. Iraq used to export 3.5 million barrels before the war. Now Iraq is selling less oil but has more expenses. Iraq's war is not like our war. If we call for mobilization today, 50,000 soldiers will come from the masses at their own expense and carrying their weapons on their own shoulders. Iraq has to pay $6,000 for each soldier dispatched from Sudan. Perhaps $1,000 is correct. I am not sure of the figure. Iraqi weapons are all purchased with pounds and dollars while the majority of our weapons are made by our workers in the country's factories. We can now put up with the war on our borders, but it is not easy for Iraq to do so.

Many foreign companies have invested in Iraq. That is why France is so panic-stricken, because it sees that it might no longer be able to work in Iraq. And if it does not work in Iraq, its large companies will go bankrupt and an economic crisis will badly damage it. Iraq is not a secure place for investment now. It is not a safe place for foreign workers.

If we just stay at our borders the way we are, we can still defeat Iraq. That is, we can do to them what they were planning to do to us. [shouts of approval]

At this point, I would like to call upon the nonaligned countries on the eve of their summit meeting. If they are truly nonaligned, they should not serve the interests of the United States. I ask them not to try to protect the gendarme Saddam. To try to protect the gendarme of the Persian Gulf will directly serve the interests of the two superpowers, the United States and the USSR. We will not tolerate this. If you are nonaligned, the best way you can serve your cause is by removing their servants from here. We will do the same and continue on the same path in the battlefield, any way that we see is appropriate.

Our boys on the battlefronts must be on the alert. All along the front from Qasr-e Shirin to Abadan, you should be on the alert. And anywhere that we deem necessary, we will launch the appropriate move. But now we are relying on one principle, that is, there should be less bloodshed. This is part of our principles. We don't want to see the martyrdom of our children and we don't want to kill the Iraqis either. But Saddam's Ba'th Party should go and the region should be left without a gendarme. This is our war policy. And as for war reparations, well naturally we have had to meet some expenses and some damage has been inflicted upon us. God willing, we will recover all our expenses. [end recording]

Continuing his second sermon, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to the conspiracies hatched by Saudi Arabia in the world oil market against the deprived people from the OPEC countries. He said: Arabia, with its small population, has no war expenses to cover. It takes all the money donated by the pilgrims for hajj rituals; it has huge currency reserves in banks. And yet, it exports millions of barrels of oil daily. This is taking place at a time when Iran, with a population of 40 million, has to pay for war expenses. What is Arabia's aim then, when it says Iran should produce 1.2 million barrels a day? Arabia's insistence on reducing Iran's oil production is a crime against the people and it serves the interests of the capitalists and the global arrogance. They intend to destroy the gains of the Iranian Islamic Revolution at OPEC.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani warned: If Arabia tries to hatch this plot with the help of Britain, then Islamic Iran -- as it proved in its struggle against terrorism -- will have the power to win this struggle.

The acting Friday imam of Tehran also warned the small governments of the Persian Gulf region and their supporters: Do not betray your people like this; if you try to play with the oil weapon, it will burn you first.

Finally, addressing our Muslim Arab brothers and sisters, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani read a sermon in Arabic.

FRIDAY IMAM CRITICIZES USSR FOR AIDING IRAQ

LD251818 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Excerpts] People from all walks of life attended the weekly Friday prayers today in Qom at Imam Sadeq, peace be upon him, Secondary School and with Ayatollah Meshkini acting as Friday imam.

The Qom acting Friday imam, commenting on the Soviet Union's complaints concerning the arrest of the Tudeh Party spies and Moscow's announcement that such developments would cause a strain in relations between the two countries, said: You spared no effort in assisting our enemy and, by providing Iraq with aircraft, ammunition, tanks and artillery, supported our enemy and caused the death of our dear youths and spilled their blood. (?At the same time), you wanted the Tudeh Party leaders to act as spies for your interests. Then, the question is, have you left any ground for relations with us?

Concluding his remarks, the Qom acting Friday imam addressed the warriors of Islam: O brave brothers of Islam, you should remain firm and determined and continue with your tireless battle and rest assured that victory and triumph will soon be yours.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF ISSUES COMMUNIQUES

Communique No 1,230

LD251723 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Feb 83

[Communique No 1,230 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name, during the past 24 hours, the proud personnel of the Air Force and the selfless combatants of the Air Corps of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while defending the airspace of our dear Islamic homeland, Iran, with extreme selflessness and devotion carried out surveillance, logistic, and transport operations for our combatants all along the operational areas near the border.

They prevented any attempt to violate the airspace of our towns by the aggressive Iraqi forces and forced the planes belonging to the Zionist regime of Iraq to flee.

The Gendarmerie personnel stationed at the Abadan and Khorramshahr fronts returned the fire of the Saddamist forces. While silencing enemy fire, our forces destroyed a number of enemy heavy and light weapons emplacements together with their crews. Several other Saddamist infidel soldiers were either killed or wounded.

On the country's other southern fronts, sporadic exchanges of fire continued. The city of Abadan yesterday again came under the long-range artillery fire of the Saddamist mercenaries, as a result of which three houses were destroyed.

Fighting continued yesterday on the western fronts with exchanges of heavy weapons and artillery fire between the power combatants of Islam and the disintegrating Saddamist mercenary forces. Our forces directed heavy artillery fire against enemy positions and supply points, setting fire to a motor pool belonging to the Saddamists and destroying a number of vehicles, including three engineering vehicles, a command post, and a mortar launcher. [as heard] Our forces also killed or wounded a number of Saddamist soldiers.

In the exchange of fire on the Marivan front, the heavy artillery fire of the combatants of Islam pounded Saddamist positions near Hargineh and Tutman. In addition to the destruction of several collective and individual entrenchments, a number of Saddamist forces were killed or wounded.

[Signed] Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Communique No 1,231

LD261726 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Communique No 1,231 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. Exchanges of heavy arms fire continued along the entire frontier fronts of Ilam, Qasr-e-Shrin, and Bakhtaran during the past 24 hours; two enemy fieldguns and two drilling vehicles were destroyed.

Our patrol groups set on fire several enemy group bunkers and one fuel tanker. During the latter operation, 10 Iraqi personnel were killed.

In the Marivan region too, enemy military positions in the vicinity of Khormalu and Maru were leveled as a result of our artillery fire.

During the past 24 hours on the Wal Fajr front and the country's southern fronts and operational zone, the forces of Islam consolidated their defensive positions and opened fire on enemy positions, halting enemy movements and actions and obstructing the activities of Iraqi engineering units.

In the Abadan and Khorramshahr operational zone, our combatant units returned enemy fire across the Arvand Rud while defending their own positions. As a result of our forces' fire, several Saddamist observation posts and bunkers were destroyed.

A number of Abadan residential sectors yesterday were under enemy long-range artillery fire; two stores and houses were destroyed.

Enemy aircraft intrusions in the past 24 hours into operational zones and a few southern and western cities of our country were neutralized by timely actions taken by our air defense units and tactical operations carried out by the fighter aircraft of the Air Force of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Signed] Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Communique No 1,232

LD271733 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Feb 83

[Communique No 1,232 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. At 1209 today, another invading Iraqi plane was shot down by the fighter planes of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Wal Fajr operational theater, thus bringing the total number of Iraqi planes shot down during Operation Wal Fajr to 11.

Yesterday all forms of Iraqi aggression against the western and southern border regions was foiled by the heavy antiaircraft fire and tactical measures taken by the self-sacrificing personnel of the Air Force.

Exchanges of artillery and heavy weapons fire continued yesterday on the southern fronts. In continuing to strengthen their defensive positions and to safeguard their relevant sectors, the victorious combatants of Islam brought enemy positions and units under alternating light and heavy weapons fire. They kept enemy movements under control and inflicted losses and casualties by sending out patrols and tank-hunting groups.

Gendarmerie and other combatants stationed on the Abadan and Khorramshahr fronts brought enemy positions and fortifications on the other side of the Arvand Rud under fire, destroying eight slit trenches, foxholes and observation posts; killing or wounding a number of Iraqi personnel; and silencing enemy fire.

Abadan again was brought under artillery fire by the Saddamist criminals; three houses were wrecked and city installations were damaged.

On the western fronts, the combatants of Islam silenced enemy fire, destroying a tank and several light and heavy weapon emplacements, and sent patrol groups inside enemy defensive positions, capturing a vehicle and quantities of equipment and killing or wounding several enemy personnel.

On the Marivan front, Ground Forces heavy artillery fire destroyed enemy positions and fortifications in the (Biyareh) and (Shobaybeh) sectors. The enemy suffered considerable losses and casualties and several enemy personnel were killed.

[Signed] Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

COMMANDER ON IRAQI CALL FOR LIMITING WARFARE

LD261142 Tehran IRNA in English 0919 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] Khorramabad, Lorestan Province, Feb 25, IRNA -- Commander of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic, Colonel Ali Sayyad-Shirazi, in a brief talk with IRNA here Friday said that Iraq's recent call that warfare between the two countries be limited only to warfronts was only an effort by that country in order to make an excuse for its crimes against Iran.

"We should not give a reply to the empty propaganda, rumours and talks of our enemies. The direction which (our) Islamic combatants have been following is the line of Allah and in this direction oppression against innocent people would never be committed," he said.

Sayyad-Shirazi said some parts of Iranian territory were still under Iraqi occupation but would soon be liberated with the completion of the victories in the battlefronts.

He also hoped that by keeping their competency and ability, the Islamic fighters of Iran would make use of the bad morale of the Iraqi forces and reach final victory in the Iraqi imposed war.

The commander of the Ground Forces said his visit to the 84th Brigade of Khorramabad was to inspect a number of changes in the brigade and to introduce its new commander to local state and religious officials.

INDUSTRIES MINISTER DEPARTS FOR LIBYA 26 FEB

GF261641 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 26 Feb 83

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 26 IRNA -- Industries Minister Mostafa Hashemi left here Saturday for Libya at the head of a delegation comprising officials of the ministry.

The trip is aimed at continuing talks on Iran-Libyan economic and industrial matters. It is also to pursue implementation of the previously-signed agreement between the Islamic Repbulic and Libya on exchange of oil experts and exports.

CUBAN FOREIGN TRADE DELEGATION ENDS VISIT

LD241010 Tehran IRNA in English 0923 GMT 24 Feb 83

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 24, IRNA -- The Cuban deputy foreign trade minister, Manuel Estefania, currently here at the head of a delegation, left Tehran this morning at the conclusion of his four-day visit.

Prior to his departure, he said that he had exchanged important views with Iranian officials in commercial, industrial and agricultural sectors, adding that the talks resulted in the creation of common fields for the expansion of mutual ties.

Estefania noted that there was a potential ground for the exchange of commodities between the two countries and that the first consignment of Cuban sugar would be delivered to Iran soon.

He also referred to the desire of both Cuba and the Islamic Republic in the expansion of their relations with the developing and non-aligned countries.